



MARTIN O'MALLEY
GOVERNOR

STATE HOUSE
100 STATE CIRCLE
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1925
(410) 974-3901
(TOLL FREE) 1-800-811-8336

TTY USERS CALL VIA MD RELAY

Media Contacts: Shaun Adamec
Governor's Office
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Office: 410-974-2316
Cell: 410-919-3206
Valerie Burnette Edgar
State Highway Admin.
Office: 410-545-0303
Cell: 443-463-7129

GOVERNOR O'MALLEY KICKS OFF LARGEST AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT TRANSPORTATION PROJECT IN MARYLAND

200 Jobs supported by the replacement of the I-695 Bridge over Liberty Road

ANNAPOLIS, MD (May 14, 2010) – Governor Martin O'Malley today kicked off the largest American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) transportation project in Maryland that will support 200 jobs while providing an important transportation upgrade in Baltimore County. The \$25 million ARRA project at the interchange of I-695 and MD 26 (Liberty Road) will replace a 50-year-old bridge, one of four bridge replacement priorities identified for Maryland and addressed by the O'Malley-Brown Administration.

"President Obama's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act has been critical in keeping more Marylanders working and in putting key transportation projects, like Liberty Road, back on track," said Governor O'Malley. "Thanks to the hard work of Maryland's Congressional Delegation and all of our federal and local partners, we are working together to revitalize our economy, to keep people employed and to build one of the best transportation networks in the nation."

From January to March 2010, the Recovery Act created or saved 13,821 jobs statewide in key job sectors including health, education, housing and transportation. The Recovery Act continues to build a legacy of moving Maryland forward with projects that reflect a balanced approach to transportation.

"The Liberty Road reconstruction project is a prime example of the recovery package working for us," said U.S. Senator Benjamin L Cardin. "It provides the funds that are needed to rehabilitate a major bridge that is used by thousands of Baltimore County residents a day and it will provide jobs for Marylanders.

One of the main goals of the recovery package is to upgrade our aging infrastructure, an important step for future growth and development in our community."

"Jobs provide the gasoline that runs our nation's economy. At the same time, we need roads and bridges that get us where we need to go safely and efficiently. The federal funds from the Recovery Act are helping us achieve both of these goals through projects like the replacement of the I-695 Bridge over Liberty Road. We are keeping jobs here in Maryland while making much-needed improvements to our infrastructure," said Congressman C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger, a Member of the House Appropriations Committee.

Maryland benefits from 348 transportation contracts totaling \$743 million in Recovery Act project investments. These projects are located in every corner of our transportation network, from the Port of Baltimore and Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport to transit in the Baltimore and Washington regions and along the roads stretching from Western Maryland to the Eastern Shore.

Governor O'Malley was joined today by Senator Cardin; Federal Highway Administrator Victor M. Mendez; Maryland Transportation Secretary Beverley K. Swaim-Staley and State Highway Administrator Neil J. Pedersen.

"By all accounts, this project would not be possible without Recovery Act funding," said Federal Highway Administrator Mendez. "By creating jobs and improving a key piece of the state's infrastructure along one of the region's fastest-growing routes, replacing this bridge will help the state's economy and provide safer travel for the people of Maryland."

When this bridge was built in 1961, it carried only 31,000 vehicles a day. Today, this 50-year-old bridge carries more than 210,000 vehicles a day with another 50,000 vehicles expected in the next 20 years. While still safe, this bridge needs to be replaced with a modern bridge that can carry today's traffic loads.

"Not only is this important infrastructure upgrade going to benefit the traveling public in the entire Baltimore metropolitan region," stated Baltimore County Executive Jim Smith. "It will further advance the Renaissance of our older communities while creating jobs that continue to propel our economy forward. I thank all of our state and federal officials for their continuing commitment to Baltimore County."

This \$25 million project to replace the Baltimore Beltway bridge over Liberty Road is one of four top priority bridges the State Highway Administration has identified for replacement. The other bridges are the \$44 million Charles Street Bridge that is underway in Towson and two bridges along I-70 in Frederick, a \$45 million project that will begin later this year. The Charles Street Bridge over the Baltimore Beltway began in October 2009 and is expected to be completed in summer 2012. Two I-70 bridges in Frederick over East South Street and Reich's Ford Road were announced in December 2009, with construction expected to begin in late 2010.

The State Highway Administration and its contractor, Concrete General, Inc., of Gaithersburg, have completed preliminary site work and have begun median work on I-695. On or about June 15, crews will relocate the ramp from MD 26 East to I-695 North. Phases Two, Three and Four - the bridge removal and replacement - will begin in late June. Phase Five, roadway repair and resurfacing, will begin in mid-summer 2012. The entire project is expected to be complete by fall 2012.

As of March 31, 2010, Maryland has expended \$612,651,363 of the \$2.19 billion awarded thus far in what is known as "Section 1512" Recovery Act funding. In addition to 1512 funding, Maryland received \$196 million in federal Medicaid matching funds and \$39 million in Family Safety Net programs, such as increases in TANF, adoption, child support, and food stamp assistance.

For the second straight year, Maryland received the top ranking in the nation for the innovative use of online tracking tools that allow the people of Maryland to monitor and track every dollar spent from the Recovery Act in Maryland communities.

###